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LEADING TENDENCIES IN LITERARY ART

The number of critical terms employed to describe the chief movements in literary history has become so large that it would appear the time is ripe for an examination of them in order to determine if, after all, we are not in their use wandering too far from true criteria of judgment. We are told that this age is realistic, that idealistic; this generation is romantic, that classic; this group of writers is naturalistic, that sentimental; another is pessimistic; still another is impressionistic,—and not even these adjectives cover the entire list which attempts to differentiate the varying types.

Often these terms illuminate, as often they obscure, the adequate interpretation of the work and the age to which they are applied. It will be safer to hold with Voltaire that the adjective is the enemy of the substantive; that no one of these terms as now applied is exclusively descriptive of any one phase of the activity of literary art, but that each represents a partial view of the process which may be said to include them all. We may grant that there are at least two relatively distinct tendencies in this process of artistic activity. The terms which, of all those now in use, most nearly designate these tendencies are realism and idealism; but these two words are so widely confused with various ideas not artistic that I shall attempt to substitute for them two other terms which may much less loosely describe these relatively distinct tendencies. The terms which I shall attempt to substitute are factualism and ideaism; but that we may not depart too abruptly from traditional usage in terminology the latter term will not be substituted until near the close of the discussion.

We may safely assume, with Aristotle, that “there is no art which is not a rationally *productive* state of mind, nor any such state of mind which is not an art”; from which “it follows that art must be the same thing as a productive state of mind under the guidance of true reason.” We may assume, also, with Schelling and, if I understand them, with the physical scientists, too, that nature is infinite activity, infinite productivity; also that

nature throughout is informed with reason, one reason, absolute reason, and that in the productive activity of reason in nature (and under nature is included man, of course) there are two tendencies,—a progressive and a retarding tendency. These assumptions will become decidedly more evident in the last half of the course of the argument than in the first.

Considering the subject first as to workmanship, both in theory and in practice we constantly find men of letters of varying types amazingly inconsistent with themselves and consistent with each other. During the co-called classic age of English poetry, Dryden in the "Epistle Dedicatory of *The Rival Ladies*" asserts that "Imagination in a poet is a faculty so wild and lawless that, like an high-ranging spaniel, it must have clogs tied to it, lest it outrun the judgment." This same great "good-sense" man of the seventeenth century elsewhere says that "the story is the least part of a poem, though it be the foundation of it; the price lies wholly in the workmanship, the forming with more care than a lapidary sets a jewel." Here we have the two extreme doctrines of realism in art; the imagination admitted as a "faculty" of the artist, but to be restrained by the judgment; the subject-matter essential to any treatment, but the value of the product wholly a matter of craftsmanship. Curiously enough, precisely these doctrines are exemplified in the practice and taught in the precepts of the so-called romanticists. Wordsworth, who is almost universally regarded as the apostle of the "romantic movement" in England, places the most conscious restraints upon imaginative flight in what he considers his best work, "*The Excursion*." What exposition of romanticism that would not define realism as well, could include in the induction such lines as these? —

"And I have traveled far as Hull to see

What clothes he might have left or other property."

Victor Hugo, the prince of romanticists in nineteenth century France, in the Preface to "*Les Orientales*" astonishes the average reader with the following question and comment,—
 "Is the workmanship good or is it bad? This is the whole extent of the critical province. For the rest, give us neither praise nor blame for the colors used, but only for the fashion of their using.

To take a rather high view of the matter, there are in poetry no good and no bad subjects; there are only good and bad poets. Besides, everything is a subject: everything is dependent on art; everything has the franchise in poetry. Ask nothing about the motive for taking the subject. Examine how the work is done, not on what or why. Beyond this the critic has no right of inquiry, the poet has no account to render." On the other hand, Henry James, though "much occupied with the delineation of aspects of the life of idle Americans in Europe and idle Europeans in America," and though himself insisting that "questions of art are (in the widest sense) questions of execution," still asserts in his "Art of Fiction" that "the subject matters, to my sense, in the highest degree, and if I might put up a prayer, it would be that artists should select none but the richest." Then Shelley, trying to preach anew an ancient creed, certainly furnishes ample ground for quarrel as to whose creed he is announcing in the following passage, the realist's or the romanticist's:—

"Poetry defeats the curse which binds us to be subjected to the accident of surrounding impressions. And whether it spreads its own figured curtain, or withdraws life's dark veil from before the scene of things, it equally creates for us a being within our being. It makes us the inhabitants of a world to which the familiar world is a chaos. It reproduces the common universe of which we are portions and recipients, and it purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being. It compels us to feel that which we perceive and to imagine that which we know. It creates anew the universe, after it has been annihilated in our minds by the recurrence of impressions blunted by reiteration. It justifies the bold and true words of Tasso: *Non merita nome di creatore, se non Iddio ed il Poeta.*"

Then when we turn to the pages of Cowper, the "father" of the naturalistic reaction in poetry which is called English romanticism, we find such minutely faithful realistic description as is not easy to parallel elsewhere:—

"The cattle mourn in corners, where the fence
Screens them, and seem half petrified to sleep
In unrecumbent sadness. There they wait

Their wonted fodder ; not like hungering man,
 Fretful if unsupplied ; but silent, meek,
 And patient of the slow-paced swain's delay.
 He from the stack carves out the accustomed load.
 Deep-plunging, and again deep plunging oft,
 His broad, keen knife into the solid mass :
 Smooth as a wall the upright remnant stands,
 With such undeviating and even force
 He severs it away."

And to quote but one more in this connection, we read in Swinburne's "William Blake": "Save the shape, and art will take care of the soul for you . . . the manner of doing a thing is the essence of the thing done, the purpose or result of it the accident."

Now what is the import of these striking similarities in the supposedly antithetical schools of literary art? Is it that, after all, there is no really divisive line to be drawn between them? Yes, and no. The fact is that the truest distinction is not to be indicated by the terms we have just been using, realist and romanticist, nor yet by these other terms commonly opposed, realist and idealist; nor are the terms romanticism and idealism interchangeable. Romanticism is an outgrowth of idealism, or the rebuilding of the world in terms of an idea, for it engages itself in showing forth objective realities in relation to mental moods. It is a conscious self-assertion of individual thought and emotion. This, for the romanticist, is the most real representation of his own world. Idealism is concerned not so much with moods of the individual mind as with universal mental concepts. The great idealists, such as Shakespeare and Milton, have made explicit wide and far-reaching mental conceptions. The romanticists, as Rousseau, Byron, and Scott, have projected important conceptions; but they were more definitely individualized conceptions, less universal in import, more individually subjective, than those of the idealist. Milton's Satan, for example, is a universal idealized figure; but Byron's Lucifer and Cain are more strictly representations of the individual self-consciousness of Byron himself. Realism and idealism suggest an even more untrue contrast than realism and romanticism. They suggest, somewhat superficially but therefore most readily, that the realist is without ideals, while, in truth, he may and

often does possess very distinct ideals, though these ideals may be more relatively finite, more relatively naturalistic than are those of the idealist. And in the work of the realist they are too frequently ideals, as Sidney Lanier would have it, of Cleverness rather than of Art. A truer distinction is suggested by the terms naturalist and idealist. But a difficulty lies here in the fact that the name naturalist has been seized upon by a certain few to designate the purpose and product of their own art, to the exclusion of that of others with equally good right to the title. Gogol and Zola are names in point.

The self-styled naturalist, such as Zola, desires above all to have his work regarded as scientific. He feels that his labors are as minute, as exact, as rational in method, and as genuinely true to fact in result, as are those of the physicist or of the chemist. But instead of mending, as he claims, the breach between science and art, he widens the breach usually by lack of sympathetic insight into any method save his own. He looks upon the idealist as one who takes the same sort of view of the world as is taken by the philosopher that divides his realm into "natural, mental, and moral," as if the mental and the moral were equivalent to the unnatural. He dubs the romanticist a mediævalist. But, on the other hand, so often does the idealist find the naturalist seeing only the "hog in nature, and thenceforth taking nature for the hog," that the naturalist's view of nature seems to him far more partial than his own can be. The term naturalist, thinks the idealist, should not be applied solely to the limited group of men who claim it, for naturalism in its truer significance should include, along with the grosser things, the representation of the most delicately evanescent, the most deeply spiritual things of life, those things which the naturalist himself so much overlooks but which are surely manifestations of nature. "Thought in sense" is important, the idealist maintains, and this the naturalist is prone to fail to see. The term "naturalist," then, requires such careful definition, and is so likely to be misconstrued, that it is by no means a satisfactory one to place in antithesis to "idealist." The difference, however, lies in relative emphasis: the idealist regarding his work as the sensuous representation of reason; the

naturalist, if we may judge from the practice of those who claim to be naturalists, most often regarding his work as the reasonable representation of the sensual.

The realist, and the naturalist, too, is sometimes distinguished from the romanticist and from the idealist by the attitude which each assumes towards the material of his art. We are asked by what we may term the "human documentists" to observe how the realist holds himself aloof from his material, as the entomologist from his specimen; how his whole being is consciously working for the skilled reproduction of the one "bit of nature" to be handed over intact, with no modification by human temperament or reasoning, to the reader. To him is frequently ascribed the title "pure artist," as if art were above all a matter of conscious technique. Ford, for example, in *The Broken Heart* assigns to his *dramatis personæ* names fitted to their qualities, and so to the artist he assigns the name "Tecnicus." Even Shakespeare, in "desiring this man's art and that man's scope," seems to sanction this dualism of execution and matter. But too often, indeed, these descriptions present to us the picture of the mere artisan, struggling with recalcitrant material; a picture in which there is no activity on the part of anything but the craftsman alone, an activity in which there is no eager "attending to the subject." And then, on the other hand, we are asked to observe how purely passive a creature the idealist is; how his whole personality is taken possession of by nature, and how through his work nature is seen by human eyes, not as she actually is, but as she is becoming, as she is when in process of transformation through the medium of the imagination,—the imagination being but a mould into which nature chooses to pour herself for the sake of the resultant form. Often, also, to the idealist alone is granted the title and rank of artist, as if art were but a mere matter of inspiration.

But the advocates of each side of this controversy too easily forget, on the one hand, that the idealistic imagination may have its conscious architectonic process as well as may the realistic understanding, and, on the other hand, that the final choice of method and the manner of exposition of the realist may be as much "inspired" as is the "story," as Dryden calls it, of the

idealist. And then, too, they forget how often the realists, the French story-writers of the nineteenth century, for example, may be found "lost in the subject"; and how often the idealists, Edgar Allan Poe, for example, may hold themselves aloof in self-conscious detachment from their subject-matter.

These antinomies run plentiful through the discussions of classes and schools of artists. They must do so, for the artist is not a simple character; he is as various and chameleon-like in his character as is the world he loves, or hates, and as is his experience of that world. He is plastic, just as his world is plastic. Still, in every contradiction there is a unity of the things opposed, for the so-called contradictory elements could not be found juxtaposed in thought, were there not a real concord between them. And so none of the assertions we have been citing about artists would refuse upon analysis to be found both true and untrue, the actuality or the unreality varying with the individual of whom it is made and varying with the individual making it.

And yet there are certain tendencies, certain aptitudes and temperaments which may be discovered as drawing an ever-varying line between groups and between individuals among artists. Let us substitute the term "factualist" for that of "realist." We may say that with the idealist the work is to present nature as informed with concepts; while the work of the factualist is chiefly within the realm of the perceptual. The factualist is engaged chiefly with what Marston in the prologue to *Antonio's Revenge* calls the "common sense of what men were and are"; while the idealist has frequently to defend his product by asserting that "such things may be."

The factualist has his ideals, but in practice they are mainly ideals of workmanship, ideals of accomplishment in skill. His chief ideal is to set forth his experience of nature precisely in terms already given him, in the forms of outward nature itself. To be sure, no factualist, whether he be called realist or even "naturalist," will deny that sheer detachment of the conferring power of personality is impossible. None will deny that man "imputes" himself, though it may be but subconsciously, and that therefore pure realism, a complete transferring of unmodified

outward fact to inward reality, is not possible. A narrator of past events knows that he cannot completely identify himself with the past; for he knows that there must be some transformation of the historical into the contemporary, for otherwise the world and its history would be wholly unintelligible to the contemporary. At the risk of stating even the very obvious, it should be said that absolute representation of objectivity is impossible. As Burke has phrased it, "art is man's nature"; that is, "art is nature humanized,"—it is man's fullest, freest exploitation of himself through a medium whose materials are drawn from a world of experience at least potentially larger than he recognizes his own nature to be. And the more of "man's unconquerable mind" there is to be found in the products which represent the conquest of nature through art, the greater is the work of art.

But the factualist attempts to strip from the object of his experience every idiosyncrasy which is purely individual to the artist or which may pertain to his public, and to reproduce in sensuous form that part of the world of experience as it objectively is. Unfortunately he sometimes forgets that the world is one of *human* experience, and that, so far as it has intelligibility, it is a humanized world. It is when dealing with the past that the factualist is most apt to fail, because history requires a consistent simplification of life, requires that conception of the universal which belongs to the generation and race of the artist himself, while we demand of the artist a contemporary conception of universal truth, a conception drawn from the habits of mind and resources of life of his own day and age; for when one does not reflect in his work the gifts of his environment, the temper of *this* age, at least, compels us to count him a monstrosity. A simple illustration of the meaning of "a contemporary conception" may be drawn from an often cited comparison of one stanza in Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" as originally written, with its final form. The original as it appears in the Mason MS. is as follows:—

Some village Cato . . . with dauntless Breast
 The little Tyrant of his Fields withstood;
 Some mute inglorious Tully here may rest;
 Some Cæsar, guiltless of his Country's Blood.

The present form is this :—

Some village-Hampden, that, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The first reading is not art at all, for it is too obviously the result of a striving for effect in terms of a former age, and is too highly reflective to be the expression of genuine emotion. The second is the outflow of a patriotic emotion characteristic of the Englishman himself, and yet, at the same time, the outcome of a really deeper reflection than is the first.

The attempt to make one's self a Roman or a Carthaginian in order to "rightly divide the word of truth" as to the life of an ancient city, results in history rather than in art, for in so far as the artist divests himself of his own personality in time, to that extent is it impossible for him to reflect the individually characteristic view of the universal concept of his own hour and place. He sets down abstract notions of the life of the ancients, and in so much is an idealist,—an idealist like the mathematician, however, and not like the creative artist. The practice, too, of the factualist who aims to reproduce a cross-section of contemporary life, as do the Dutch painters and most American novelists, fails, too often, of the high attainment of art, because the craftsman does not employ sufficient material or, at least, sufficiently suggestive material, to give to the mind of the spectator or reader a suggestion of harmonious wholeness. We expect in experience the broken arcs, but we demand of art nothing less than the suggestion of the perfect round. "The pure artist," says Swinburne, "never asserts; he suggests, and therefore his meaning is totally lost upon moralists and sciolists—is indeed irreparably wasted upon the run of men who cannot work out suggestions." This saying is in the characteristic form of that rhapsodist, but it contains the truth.

The factualists may be historically divided into two general classes: those who attempt to report the fact in its individuated selfhood apart from any suggestiveness it may have in human experience, and those who represent fact for the sake alone of its rich suggestiveness. The former class of necessity

fail of complete attainment of their aim, for it is not possible for man to do what Wordsworth brought a railing accusation against Crabbe as doing,—setting forth “mere matter of fact.” The latter class shade more or less into idealism, for, in the main, with the idealist it is the rich suggestiveness of the theme that makes for art. And yet, as Poe has maintained, it is inaccurate to confound mere richness with ideality. The factualists may be divided in another way into two classes: according as they reproduce *any* facts as these facts come within the scope of experience, and according as they select among those facts in obedience to some principle of choice. The principle is commonly that of individual liking, though Flaubert insisted that he wrote once at least, in “Emma Bovary,” for very hate of what he was depicting.

The factualist, then, is primarily interested in the fact itself; but he finds, nevertheless, his justification as an artist who produces something of social value, in generalization from the fact when it is thoroughly apprehended. The idealist is primarily interested in the idea elicited from the fact, and finds justification in the raising of the fact through the idea into a higher realm of fact. The idealist is constantly revealing that there are increasingly higher realms of possible fact to which the idea may progressively lead. The reënacting, for instance, of the scenes of horror in the mind of Lady Macbeth are more revelatory of the inner significance of the outward facts of life than were the scenes themselves as they were being objectively enacted. Of course, ideas may be regarded as facts (“the idea *is* the fact,” says Matthew Arnold), but just here we are employing the term “fact” purely in the sense of a reality objective to the human mind. Even though the factualist may be a psychologist studying his own states of consciousness, yet he studies them as discrete and isolated. But the realist, or factualist, who is artist worth while, such as Teniers, or George Eliot, studies the material of art not for purposes of mere static precision in presentation, but for purposes of interpretation also. Not what is it? only, but what does it signify? as well, is the query. The factualist equally with the idealist may cry—

“Unless himself above himself he can
Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!”

But the factualist usurps no function of the prophet to see a "projected efficiency," as Benjamin Kidd terms it, beyond the facts themselves; if he is a seer, he is such a seer as the historian who draws his conclusions from the mere past or mere present alone. Still, simply as *artist*, as one who is striving and re-striving to attain a more nearly perfect reproduction of his facts, he is really idealistic. His work is prophetic, whether he will or no, of a future reach which always does and always will exceed his grasp. When, however, the idealist becomes realist, or factualist, to the degree of thinking that in his work is a complete reproduction of his vision, the result may be disastrous, for progress in his case may cease. It is told of a Danish sculptor that he labored for many years upon the idea of a certain figure, setting aside as unsatisfactory one after another of his completed statues. One day, finally, a friend entered his studio and found the sculptor weeping bitterly. When asked the cause of his grief, the sculptor, pointing to a finished piece of work, replied that he had at last attained his ideal, and that there was now nothing more in life for him to strive for. Whether the story be true or not, it is life-like. The larger visions are likely to vanish when the idealist becomes a factualist, for it is the power of imagination that is uppermost in the idealist, the faculty of imitation that is uppermost in the factualist. Philostratus said that imitation will make what it has seen, but imagination what it has not seen. Which is the more truly vision is not a hard question,—and there must be visions, for "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

Thus far in our inquiry we have been unable to discover any but an indeterminate margin between the two great schools of artists. Let us attempt a distinction which appears rather obviously in art in the medium of language. In literature the realist is generally a writer of prose; the poets are commonly professed idealists. Now the purpose of the prose-writer assumes a dialogue,—it may not be that the second person is to speak directly, but none the less he is assumed as present, and questioning, commenting, objecting. But a dialogue is essentially dramatic, and yet can dramatic speech be anything but idealized, idealized at least in the sense of being informed

with the ideas of the speakers? The poet, however, is a soliloquizer; but soliloquy is nothing unless it become realized through fact, or has, in any event, its starting-point in fact. That the dictum of oneness in character and method of the lunatic, the lover, and the *poet* was but jocular, is shown by Shakespeare's own practice in assigning the parts of madness in his great tragic characters almost exclusively to prose.

Again, we may try a distinction by describing as presentation the work of the artist who expresses merely his own point of view; as *representation* that of him who expresses the point of view of others. The realist, consciously attempting to divest himself of his own personal points of view, considers himself as wholly re-presentative in his art; the point of view in his method, he thinks, being that of the general mind (assuming that there is such a mind) in which all actuality exists,—which, by the way, could hardly be framed to express more explicitly the doctrine of inspiration, the doctrine the realist is so eager to deny. But the patrons of his art often extol the artist as having so fully wreaked his own personality upon his material that he has succeeded in individualizing the point of view, and, therefore, to them it is not the general mind which has succeeded in revealing its conception, but a particular mind which has succeeded in conquering nature. The idealist, in his turn, conscious of his unique exaltation of mind, reproduces his individual experience in terms of art; but he is regarded as revealing the universal rather than any particular point of view. Thus, both realist and idealist are presentative or representative, as you like, and the distinction, once more, fails to set apart.

But how can realism, or factualism, be justified, if its avowed purpose is to reproduce that which already exists? It justifies itself by maintaining that its purpose is, by reproduction, to increase the number of minds who may experience the already existent in all its deeply-wrought reality; that it is not merely multiplying copies of the real, but is giving the human mind wider acquaintance with the real. And, viewed thus, we must admit that realistic art performs a great function, for it is a two-fold criticism of life; it is both appreciation of matter and correction of mind.

The philosophy of realism is comprised in the phrase "know thyself." That it should be so prevalent a form of art in our own day is because of the character of our life. The life of the senses has been so full and so varied that reason has not yet furnished the analysis which provides, the further column for the fixing of the completed work of art that, to use the Kantian terms, shall span the yawning chasm between sensuous experience and reason. Realism is teaching the world to know its life vistas at the level of the given development of life at the time when the realistic work of art is produced. The best realism does not profess to give pictures of inert matter alone, but of that which is active in matter. And yet there are occasions of life that so rapidly transcend any static form of expression that can be identified as the reproduction of *this* and not of *that*, that the moulds of realism are inadequate to these occasions. Artistic activity is not, as is often claimed, wholly spontaneous. It is a creative activity; but the material for creative activity already exists before the artist begins his work. There is no such thing as creation *de novo*; creation is best signified in art as in nature by the primitive meaning of the Hebrew verb "to create," which was "to mould,"—hence the artist must give great attention to form. But attention to form cannot be wholly spontaneous; therefore, when the activity of realism becomes too cultivated for a relatively spontaneous movement it then must be supplemented by a freer activity, that of idealism.

It would seem that if there can be drawn any even relatively distinct line between the functioning of the activity of art among the classes of artists, it must be only upon this basis of creative activity. Creative activity, in general, is the functioning of the general mind as what I wish to call artistic personality. The artistic personality is the universal *organizing* power in nature and in human life. It is the power which bridges the gap, ultimately, between the conceptions of the mind reasoning through philosophy, the shocks of experience in the mind's ever-renewed contact with experimental fact. The bridging of this gap gives us what we term the beautiful, both in nature in the large and in the products of human activity. In the work of individual artists the work is performed by the artistic personality

confining itself to specific operation through individual centres known as human personalities. In practical judgment we constantly recognize this distinction ; as when we say, "His literary and personal life were harmonious," or "His artistic and personal life were widely at variance." I am not pleading here for the ancient inspirational theory of art, though it is a truth to which the realist as well as the idealist is often paying tribute, that there is a power not himself that makes for creation. It would be difficult to find, perhaps, a realist who would with William Blake "dare not pretend to be any other than the secretary" of demonic authors ; but what George Eliot has said of the necessity laid upon her to take in hand "Silas Marner" is familiar to all, and Gustav Frenssen says that in "Jörn Uhl" he was *compelled* to give utterance to his thought. These artists did not mean that there was being exerted a power wholly from without, nor that there was in operation a law which was confined in its operations to them alone. None would be more ready to admit that such a condition is that of anarchy, and not of law. But the idealist as well as the factualist believes that the beauty of a particular thing consists in the fulfilment of the law of its own being. Now, a law is not a law if its operation is within a particular thing alone. So, then, it is not merely the particular experience that inspires the artist, but law, or principle, that is greater than any one manifestation of itself and that has relations which identify the meaning of the particular experience with significance in its entirety. This theory of the significant and the characteristic in art is not so new as many a modern realist would have us think. The old classic art would not have been produced in the forms which have survived to us if this theory had not been at least implicitly in the minds of the artists. It is, indeed, the fundamental idea underlying the Platonic exposition of art. Hermogenes, too, in his *Idea*, written probably about 170 A.D., expounds a quite explicit theory of the characteristic in art. However much in some aspects our present exposition may seem to be an echo of the "inspirational" theory, yet it is modified, as will appear more fully as we proceed, by the recognition of the conscious part played by the human personality and the consequent modi-

fication of the process of the general mind by that of the individual artist.

The factualist and the idealist vary, of course, in the expression of the functioning of the artistic personality. Through the labor of the factualist the creative power which we are calling the artistic personality constructs the work of art at a level communicable to the average man; to the idealist, art is of high worth in proportion as it affects average taste. No one better than the realist lives up to the teaching of Boileau that "*L'esprit n'est point ému de ce qu'il ne croit pas.*" But through the creative power working in the idealist the art product is represented at a level of communication not, as a rule, yet fully attained in the grasp of its significance by the average man. Idealistic art is not usually a democratic art. Now, the conscious effort of the factualist is so to identify himself with the thing which supplies the subject-matter of his art that he can completely rationalize it, and so thoroughly to employ his skill that he may transfer his complete rationalization of it over into the experience of others. This, however, is impossible of perfect attainment, for to assume that another can view and understand and feel anything exactly as I do, is to assume the identity of that other with myself. What the factualist really does is to give himself over to the inspiration of the artistic personality as it has found expression in the creative processes which have brought the datum of experience to its condition at the moment of the factualist's experience of it, and then he attempts to correlate that expression with the state of understanding of the audience as that understanding has been formed by the growth of the artistic personality therein. The appeal of the work of art is primarily to the taste, but it is great art to the degree that it admits of rational interpretation. We conclude, at this point, that the human personality of the factualist and the functioning of the artistic personality are relatively at balance.

The individuality of the factualist is merged into that of the fact, so far as such a thing is possible. Yet it is this very interpenetration of the mind of the artist and the intelligibility of the objective thing that, strangely, has given rise to the belief in the aloofness of the factualist from his subject-matter. The con-

dition is not aloofness, but, when successful work is being accomplished, it is practical identity. It is the idealist who more truly abdicates his personality in his experience of the world, and who feels that the object which gives incitement to the artistic process is more active than he. It is with all idealists as with the poets, who, in Shelley's words, "Learn in *suffering* what they teach in song." In contemplating his object (for art even more penetratively than philosophy is contemplation to a *definite* end), the individuality of the idealist is not merged with that of the thing to be represented in his art work, but through that thing there come visions which make the artist feel that he is identified with a personality which includes both himself and his object. It is the idealist who goes about as if listening to melodies unheard, unheard almost even by himself. The personality of the idealistic artist seems to be the medium for the revelation of the infinite personality which cannot be found in such copious measure in the less largely related fact of the realist. In the realist we see the artistic personality as finite, for it identifies individual complexes of itself with other individual complexes of itself and simply reveals the one to the other. May it not be that the fact is experiencing the artist while the artist is experiencing the fact? But in the idealizing artist the artistic personality is seen as relatively infinite, because it identifies itself, more nearly as a whole, for the moment at least, with a portion of itself, and in the light of that identification it reveals, not only the significance of certain individual parts, but a glimpse of the inward reality and suggestiveness of the whole. In his "Essay on Criticism," Schopenhauer says, "The source of all pleasure and delight is the feeling of kinship." Adam Smith with his doctrine of sympathy, Giddings with his of consciousness of kind, and many others with similar formulas in various philosophical fields have, along with Schopenhauer, made this thought now rather commonplace. Unquestionably it aids in explaining most of our art activity; though its converse may be equally true, as Heraclitus indicates, with his *logia*,—"the contending tends together," and "harmony most beautiful is formed of discords." Men often take keenest pleasure in things seemingly most alien to themselves,—for example, in the indulgence of the

most poignant sorrow ; with Jeremiah they hug their sorrow to themselves and would even publish it abroad : "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto *my* sorrow."

We may sum up the trend of our argument here by saying that through the work of the realist the artistic personality recreates in socialized, that is, highly communicable, forms that which has already had actual and explicit existence. Through the idealist's work it creates in a certain sense anew, that is, there is not simply interpretation to self of self already explicitly existing, but revelation of self potential, or to be. The revelation through the idealist is, at times, even to a self potential ; for certainly not in all the light of centuries thus far have we exhausted the revelation through Plato, St. Paul, St. Francis, and Shakespeare.

The factualist, then, may be filled with the "Holy Ghost" of his hour, but the idealist is not limited to such a small "parenthesis within eternity." The future is the idealist's as well as the past and the present. The factualist is the scientist among artists ; the idealist is prophet. The former measures by volume, the latter by weight ; the former is critic, analyst ; the latter is more truly creator, synthesist. The two are, therefore, necessarily complementary. Historically, the idealists have been men of genius more often than the factualists, for they have more often held a clearer idea of the character of nature as organic and have more often possessed a deeper inlook into universal human emotions. Judged by the permanent width of appeal, too, the idealist has been the more genius. He has also been more conscious of the presence within his own mind of the principle of reason to which all things are relative. But the two are complementary, for factualism prepares the way for idealistic interpretation, and is the verifier of that interpretation when idealism has made it. In his own interpretation the factualist rarely gives full insight, for his work has been too fragmentary ; for instance, when he sets forth human life he is most likely to give us temperaments rather than characters. And yet he excels the idealist oftentimes, because his fine technique forbids his getting away from actual life, and compels him, as Falstaff urges, to "speak like a man of the world." As we have suggested,

after the idealizing process has been completed so far as can be by the given artist, there remains the work of realistic verification of the same material before the human mind can grasp the full import of the idealistic insight. We may, in fact, call realism interpretative, and call idealism revelatory, for revelation suggests an addition to the stock of human knowledge and emotion, while realism works upon the *status quo* of artistic revealment. And yet by a continuous process of more exact presentation of the external the realist raises his material into the realm of the internal and the more subtle, and it then becomes subject-matter for idealism once more. For example, the facts of history must be baldly envisaged before there can be interpretation of them in terms of ideas. But then there must be interpretation of any given body of facts before there can be an understanding of a consequent body of facts. In all this, again, we see the two forms of envisaging the world are complementary.

If a perfect realism were possible, individuality would find no place in art, for the complete identification of the artist with the minutiae of his material would be a complete identification with the cosmos as a whole and the loss of any uniqueness in the point of view of the human artist himself. So, also, complete idealism is impossible, for the dynamic character of the cosmos would no longer exist if a complete revelation of it were attained.

If we examine the fine arts, it may seem to us that sculpture should be capable of reproducing most accurately the obvious factualistic evaluation of experience, for two reasons; first, because sculpture is the best qualified for moulding into a form sensuously like the outward form of the object, and, second, because it is the factualist who confines himself most closely to the representation of the outward and external evidence of life, because, from the nature of his theory, he deals chiefly with the realm of perception. I say outward and external, for even in the face of the admission we make as to the characteristic in ancient art, yet we are becoming bold enough to-day to express the conviction that in the sculpture of the most famous schools there is little, very little, noteworthy representation of the significant beyond that of mere form. Longinus remarked that "Whereas, then, in statuary we look for close resemblance to

humanity, in literature we require something which transcends humanity"; but I do not quite see how literature or anything else can transcend humanity, even in aspiration, and as to statuary the fact is that from Phidias to the "Secessionists" of modern Berlin the sculptors have usually been, in the Hegelian sense, "romantic" and the farthest possible from any representation of humanity in any lifelike significance. Hegel's scale of the arts, making sculpture the "classic" art *par excellence*, extremely suggestive as it is, will not stand too close historical analysis. Then, music, which to the *a priori* theorist is the preëminent type of idealistic art, is growing now day by day increasingly imitative of incidental commonplace reality. Literature is the most adequate medium of expression of the full round of human activity,—experience, thought, feeling, will,—because of the wide range of adaptability of its medium, language, both to the experience of the artistic consciousness and to the apprehension of the public.

When we take into account such artistic phenomena as Swift, as Ibsen, and as Shakespeare in his moods of bitterness, we find the human personality rebelling against the domination of the artistic personality in its assumption of possession of the functioning of the human personality in creative activity. The human personality will, at times, have its own interpretation of its experience. The individuated creative personality sets itself up as a personality of coequal right of interpretation of itself and of all else, with that of the all-inclusive personality. It will not acknowledge the validity of an idealistic interpretation; and it scorns "the mud and scum of things" in factualism's dead level of reproduction. This is pessimism,—or if one likes, it is, from the point of individuality, optimism, but the common-sense of mankind calls it pessimism. Pessimism is a partial realism, a realism in which the human and the artistic personality are not at equilibrium, but in which the former asserts itself against the latter. The process of pessimism can hardly be called creation, but rather negation, though this negation, in the history of its working, has been a clearing of the ground for a new creation. In realism the human and the artistic personality are reconciled; in idealism the artistic personality is dominant; in pessimism

the human is dominant. Pessimism is the most fully individualized form of art, realism or factualism the most highly socialized, idealism the most cosmic, that is to say, idealism generally suggests most fully a well-ordered whole. The distinction between the individual human personality and the artistic personality now appears more clearly when we place together these three phases of art activity. The former is the individuated form of personality carrying on the ordinary functions of human activity, while the latter is personality *in toto*, active through the individuated form of personality, either, as in pessimism, recoiling upon its own activity, or, as in realism or factualism, reconciled to its own contemporary stage of activity, or, as in idealism, transcending its own contemporary activity. The goal of pure realism, if there could be such a realism, is the apprehension of what factually is; the goal of idealism is the apprehension of what really is to be; the goal of pessimism (which goal is implied, but not recognized, for pessimism thinks it has no goal) is the apprehension of what actually, paradoxical as it may seem, ought to be. The activity of each of these is pessimistic in the sense that the striving of each is caused by a feeling of dissatisfaction with the human personality's apprehension of what is the essential. In fact, in idealism pessimism is deepest of all, for the dissatisfaction with the terms of experience is so thoroughgoing that objective experience is transcended in imagination.

There is a logical progression of the artistic personality through these three phases. First there is apprehension and statement of things as they *factually* appear in perception; then, in pessimism, of things as they do not and, as it is thought, will not appear; and, finally, in idealism, as they are or are to be in terms of infinite reality. In the history of art the human personality has often passed from one phase to another, as, for instance, did Björnson in revolting from early idealism, into realism, and as did Gogol, from early idealism into realism and at last into pessimism. The order is an ever-recurring one, and in the individual, it will be observed, the order is that described as occurring in the activity of the general creative mind. The activity of art is a unified activity, and these reversions and advances justify the con-

clusion that consciousness is manifesting a sense of incompleteness in the attainment of any one artistic standpoint. There is a never-ending search for the higher reality,—in pessimism, even, this is true, for the halt in the process is only apparently final. Historically, pessimism has failed as an interpretation, because it confessedly does not see far or clearly. It finds mystery in the presence of all things, and in the presence of this mystery its tendency is to sink hopeless and despairing. That which most commonly calls itself realism has also failed, because, by its own claims, it is decadent, for either it finds its ideal in the past or it is complacently satisfied with the contemporary. Idealism is saved from failure only by its confession, with pessimism, of inadequacy, but a confession made with the added hope of further and more highly idealized interpretation.

We have now found that the dichotomy of art as realistic and idealistic is insufficient. The trichotomy as idealistic, factualistic, and pessimistic is also inadequate, for each is in varying degree a form of the other. Yet for practical purposes of classification which the mind, because of its analytic demands, is never content without, at least a dualistic description of the functioning of art is suggestively helpful. It might be thought that such a practical dualism could be found in the employment of the terms *pessimism* and (George Eliot's term), *meliorism*. I think it is true that one may view the artist from whatever point and find that his art may be easily classed as either pessimistic or melioristic, and, furthermore, that both pessimism and meliorism are vital to the development of art. The classicist, for example, is a pessimist, for he conceives a definitely planned and proportioned work, and concludes it,—which is a denial of the possibility of improvement. And yet, though pessimism, as we have said, is a partial realism, the work of the classicist, nevertheless, often approaches idealism, since to the degree that it reveals unity in a great diversity, as it so often does, it is ideal. The mediæval romanticist is a meliorist, for, while rationalizing thought may bring him from time to time to a stage of completeness, yet imagination leads him as constantly to a sense of incompleteness. This, as is often pointed out, is to be discerned in the frequent altering of cathedral plans while the structures

were in process of building, and is to be discerned also in the ever-haunting sense of other-worldliness. To the degree that any artist is scientist, in the common acceptation of that term, or moralist, or theologian, to that degree is he a pessimist, for he dogmatizes on the basis of observed uniformities; while the meliorist knows no laws except such as are to govern both observed and also as yet unobserved and, it may be, now wholly inconceivable changes, not uniformities. "Projected efficiency" is the test of the value of a work of art to the meliorist. "Does it work *now*?" is the query of the pessimist. One who is interested in either the purely abstract or the purely concrete is pessimist. On the one hand he is anatomist or colorist, for example, for the sake of the correctness of the representation; that is to say, he is absorbed in the purely concrete, for he desires most a reproduction of the original fact. Or, on the other hand, he is interested in the recognition of the verisimilitude of his work to the concrete fact, and not in the concrete fact itself; that is, the feeling aroused in the presence of the reproduction is a feeling for the purely abstract. In the one or the other of these attitudes he rests. But the meliorist is interested in the abstract-concrete; that is, in the abstract only for the sake of the concrete, and in the concrete only for the sake of a higher abstraction which, in its turn, will find form once more in a higher concrete.

The pessimist sees the organic character of nature, and reproduces that character in terms of the facts in which it is found. The meliorist sees the organic relationship in the world of ideas, and attempts to express the relationship by means of images or symbols whose elements are taken from the objective world (because that is the world upon which all communication is dependent), yet images whose reality exists only in the mind. But pessimism is scientific rather than philosophic, for its method is almost purely analytic,—it lacks the synthesis of philosophy. The more truly synthetic philosophy becomes, the more, I think, it demands expression in the concrete forms of art. Pessimism we cannot regard as a metaphysic, but rather as a denial of metaphysic. It denies that one can go beyond the facts of the given hour. The teleology of science, of philosophy, and of art

may ultimately be the same, and probably are,—they are all ultimately practical. Science is eminently practical. We can hardly call interest in polar expeditions (if they be cited) scientific; it is an artistic impulse that sends men to such searching. Philosophy is also practical, for its business is to examine the conclusions of science and see if, peradventure, science may not arrive at more correct conclusions. Art is more disinterested than science and philosophy; but as civilization advances in experience and knowledge, art more and more critically analyzes the basal concepts of the practical procedure of life. I am sure there are and can be no more “practical” values for life than those presented in the delight in the beautiful. All this may be pragmatism; but doubtless the voice of the Lord is in both pragmatism and rationalism.

For the blending of science, philosophy, and art in concrete works of creation, the tendency is constant. The scientist sometimes so completely makes the world of fact the content of his own mind that he is able to formulate it in such way as to make the summary of the factual existence in the abstraction remain as a work of art long after the facts themselves may have lost their working significance,—such high pleasure does the abstraction continue to afford the mind. A Michelangelo and a Leonardo da Vinci make science art. Then in art the realist, at least, so often sets forth so exactly and so obviously facts that are of the then and the there or of the now and here and not of each and all, that they do not stand for any universal hypothesis. They are mere facts of history, and they soon cease to afford pleasure, because of the failure to relate to any dynamic, ever-living idea. The tendency of “*The Human Comedy*” is to make art scientific; in philosophy the Platonic myths are art; in art “*The Ring and Book*” is philosophy and science. In the work of the impressionist we have rather a philosophy than an art, for his work is the attempt to body forth the universal and the characteristic by means of the indefinite and the vague. In art the pretty, the ornamental, the rococo, are all the outgrowth of a pessimistic philosophy, for in these the human personality denies the validity of both the idealistic and the purely realistic interpretation; but, not content with mere denial, it attempts a re-

creation, and the result is art in which the finite prevails and not the infinite. To be a trifle more specific, ornamentalism in art is pessimism trying to make actual fact better than it is. The more any art becomes analytic, or scientific, the more it is pessimistic; and the more philosophic, or metaphysical, any art becomes, the more it is melioristic.

But there is a serious objection to the use of the terms pessimistic and melioristic, in that they are commonly employed with an exclusively moral connotation. In fact, the chief trouble with the pessimist is that he is ever searching for the good rather than for the beautiful,—for the “good for something,” to quote Kant again, and not for the good in itself, which latter is the beautiful. And the same thing is true of the meliorist. But all art is fundamentally idealistic, for it is all an attempt to make possible, for whatever given purposes, a completer idea of that which is the true nature of the matter with which art deals, whether the art be that of pessimism or that of meliorism. Pessimism, however, lays claim to the closer adherence to bald fixed fact, while meliorism is the recognition of a progress which in its totality is as yet but a mental concept. But idealism is subject to the same objection as are pessimism and meliorism, for the average mind finds it almost impossible to dissociate the ideal from the ethical; and for this reason we may drop the *I* and substitute the term *ideaism*, which can hardly suggest anything but a process according to mental conception, which should be of no preconceived sort, but undetermined save by the matter in hand.

The conclusions then are these: In the first place, all art is fundamentally idealistic, and all such terms as naturalism, realism, romanticism, classicism, secessionism, ornamentalism, pessimism, and meliorism, are no more than designations of partial activities of the conscious artistic personality working through human personalites in the one process of ideal construction, not simply re-construction. But, in the second place, for the purpose of distinguishing the retarding and the progressive tendencies in the process of art creation, two terms may be employed, and these terms we are suggesting are *factualism* and *ideaism*. *Factualism* we may employ to designate all art pur-

poses and processes that aim at or succeed in reproducing that which actually objectively exists, and idealism to designate all art purposes and processes that aim at or succeed in reproducing that which is in the mind in any way a modification, in its reality or suggestiveness, of what has form in actual objective existence. Factualism and idealism, then, as thus defined would more accurately than any other terms now employed name the complementary tendencies in the process of the struggle of creative activity to rebuild in communicable forms the mind's experience of its world and to arouse aspirations for a fuller and a more adequate experience.

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